

Conservation Agreement
for the
Conservation Assessment and Strategy
of the
Wet Canyon Talussnail *Sonorella macrophallus*
from the Pinaleno Mountains
Graham County, Arizona

USDA Forest Service
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Arizona Game and Fish Commission

Final - December 15, 1999

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

The signatory parties (Cooperators) to this agreement affirm the mutual goal of securing and protecting the Wet Canyon talussnail (*Sonorella macrophallus*) within its known range in southeastern Arizona, specifically Wet Canyon in the Pinaleno Mountains, Graham County. If populations of Wet Canyon talussnail are found in other locations, the pertinent documents can be amended to incorporate additional direction for management. To attain this goal, the Cooperators further agree to implement the actions delineated in the Wet Canyon Talussnail Habitat Conservation Strategy (Strategy) to conserve this species and its occupied and potential habitat on the Coronado National Forest (Forest). Representatives of the Cooperators will gather data and provide recommendations to the Cooperators on implementation of the Strategy, habitat management, need for scientific investigations, and monitoring of the Wet Canyon talussnail.

The Coronado National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) was amended on July 31, 1998, to incorporate the direction contained in the Strategy. The Strategy, the standards and guidelines provided in the Forest Plan, and the Cooperators share the common

goal of ensuring the long-term viability of the talussnail on the Forest. The purpose of this Conservation Agreement is to ensure that the management measures outlined in the Strategy are implemented in a timely manner, and that the status of the Wet Canyon talussnail is either stabilized or improved to the point that it will not require listing under Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act. To this end, the Cooperators agree to the following actions:

1. Evaluate the stability of Wet Canyon talussnail's population and habitat.
 - a. Develop and initiate a monitoring program for the species and its habitat within 12 months of signing this Conservation Agreement.
 - b. Annually document the results of monitoring and evaluate the effectiveness of the monitoring program.
 - c. Incorporate changes, as necessary, into the monitoring program.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of the Strategy and the need for listing of the species under the Endangered Species Act.
 - a. Annually review and document the implementation of the Strategy.

- b. Incorporate changes in management strategy, as necessary, into the Strategy.
- 3. Coordinate activities associated with the conservation of the Wet Canyon talussnail.
 - a. Oversee implementation of actions delineated in the Strategy.
 - b. Review proposed research and management activities that may affect the Wet Canyon talussnail.

The U. S. Forest Service agrees to assume the lead in ensuring the above actions are carried out with the assistance of the other Cooperators. Provided that these actions are done successfully, it is expected that the known population of the Wet Canyon talussnail will be stabilized or enhanced so that its listing as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act is obviated.

This Conservation Agreement has been initiated to effectively remove human-caused threats to the Wet Canyon talussnail and its habitat, to maintain stability of the population, and to protect the watershed containing its habitat. This document's primary purpose is to identify interim conservation measures to protect the Wet Canyon talussnail by removing enough threats

to preclude the need to list it under the Act. Protection of the Wet Canyon talussnail through a Conservation Agreement is particularly relevant because of the following factors:

- The habitat is entirely under the control of the USDA Forest Service, which is a signatory to this agreement.
- There is rudimentary understanding of the relationship between proper habitat management and maintenance of the species, and of the specific management actions that will be needed for its conservation.
- Habitat of the talussnail appears intact and in sufficiently good condition to continue to support the species.
- Other than re-routing a 30-foot length of trail in Wet Canyon, conservation actions mainly involve refraining from some activity that would lessen the value of habitat for the talussnail, rather than undertaking corrective or restorative action.
- Cooperators in this agreement commit to seek funding sources to implement all aspects of this Conservation Agreement.

AUTHORITY

The authority for the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to enter into this voluntary Conservation Agreement derives from the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended; the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, as amended; and the Migratory Bird Conservation Act, as appropriate. The U. S. Forest Service enters into this Agreement under authority of the National Forest Management Act of 1976, and the Sikes Act of 1960. The State of Arizona, by and through the Arizona Game and Fish Commission enters into this Agreement under authority of Arizona Revised Statute 17-231.B.7 and the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. In all references to the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, the term “Department” and “Director” shall mean the Arizona Game and Fish Department and its Director, acting as administrative agent for the Commission.

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and National Marine Fisheries Service signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on January 25, 1994. The purpose of the MOU is to "... establish a general framework for cooperation and participation in the conservation of species that are tending toward federal listing as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act." The MOU provided that the cooperators would work together and participate in the conservation of selected plant and animal species and their habitats to reduce, mitigate, and possibly eliminate the need for their listing under the Endangered Species Act by developing habitat conservation assessments leading to Conservation Agreements.

The five-member Federal agency MOU was amended on March 20, 1994, to include the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies as a consigner, thus bringing representation from state wildlife agencies into the development and implementation of conservation agreements. The Arizona Game and Fish Department also independently signed Memoranda of Understandings with the U. S. Forest Service and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to cooperate in activities pursuant to recovery of federally listed species and the removal of threats from species considered for listing.

DURATION OF AGREEMENT

The duration of this Conservation Agreement is for five years following the date of the last signature. Annually, or at other times as necessary, the Cooperators will review the Conservation Agreement and its effectiveness to determine whether it should be revised. By the 60th month, the Conservation Agreement must be reviewed and either modified, renewed, or recommended for termination. Reviews will be documented by memo, and distributed to interested parties.

If some portion of this agreement cannot be carried out or if cancellation is desired, the party requesting such action will notify the other Cooperators in writing within 30 days of the changed circumstances. When and if it becomes known that there are threats to the survival of the Wet Canyon talussnail that are not or cannot be resolved through this Conservation

Agreement, action will be initiated to list the Wet Canyon talussnail under Section 4 of the Endangered Species Act, as amended, through either a proposed rule or an emergency rule.

Events that could require the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service to initiate listing of the species include, but are not limited to: failure to follow the Forest Plan amendment regarding management of Wet Canyon; failure to develop and implement a monitoring plan acceptable to all signatory parties; or loss of funding or inability to implement protective actions.

Forest Supervisor

Coronado National Forest

USDA Forest Service

Date

Regional Director

U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date

Director

Secretary to the Commission and

Director of the Arizona Game and Fish Department

Date